



**Annual Report and Accounts for the year  
ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022**

## Chairman's report

The world has changed so much in the past couple of years that 'normality' seems like a very long time ago – but the gradual progress back to business as usual began in the period under review, although with some setbacks along the way.

Our first gathering came on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2021 when a number of us gathered for a picnic in the wonderful gardens of Sarah and Johnny Shippey – and attempted some singing with varied degrees of success!

We next came together for a short series of 'socially distanced' rehearsals at Ely Methodist Church at the end of July, resuming later in August and getting properly underway again on 9<sup>th</sup> September to prepare our repertoire for the joint concert with Fairhaven Singers which took place in the Cathedral on 30<sup>th</sup> October. Both choirs sang very well individually and the combined effort in the Rutter Gloria coupled with Prime Brass was quite spectacular!

Rehearsals continued at Ely Methodist Church during the continued non-availability of King's School due to the necessary prioritisation of scholars' wellbeing in the immediate post-COVID period. We remain most grateful to the church for helping us to get 'back on track' and providing us with a wonderful rehearsal space over this period.

Christmas arrived with a re-staging at Chatteris Parish Church on 11<sup>th</sup> December of Matthew's excellent Messiah highlights programme, again with Steve Bingham and his Con Brio Chamber Orchestra together with the wonderful solo voice of Julia Riley. With an enthusiastic audience and the spectacular Christmas lights of Chatteris in the background, the year came to a very colourful conclusion. We were pleased to return to Chatteris after a very long absence.

I am pleased to say that for all the concerts we promoted we offered free tickets to young people under 16 years of age and reduced prices for the unwaged and disadvantaged in accordance with our charitable objectives.

Returning to the Methodist Church on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2022 we entered a period of rehearsal for our re-staging of the postponed Cherubini Requiem concert at the Cathedral. Two rehearsals in this period were successfully held at St John's School, one of which (24<sup>th</sup> February) included the final AGM of the choir under the pre-CIO governance arrangements.

The concert took place successfully on 12<sup>th</sup> March with good attendance and an enthusiastic reception in the Presbytery of the Cathedral. Our guest instrumentalists on this occasion included the organist Roland Robertson, making his debut with Ely Consort.

Rehearsals returned to King's Ely recital hall after Easter. Sadly however our plans for a spectacular 'Grand Tour' concert of Italian opera highlights, together with movements from the Puccini Messa di Gloria planned for 2<sup>nd</sup> July at Sutton Parish Church and featuring the

splendid tenor voice of Charne Rochford, were sadly thwarted by a COVID outbreak within the choir. A disappointing reminder that the pandemic has not entirely left us yet.

Some of the repertoire (as intended) was performed at concerts in Lucca, Montecatini Terme and Siena in the long-planned concert tour to Tuscany, which finally took place with most of the original group (plus some extras!) on 14<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> July. The blazing temperatures were daunting but a great time was had by all.

The tour was the last time that Charlie Penn performed with us, his regular engagement as rehearsal pianist having come to an end during the year as Charlie pursued other opportunities elsewhere. We were very fortunate to have Charlie with us for so long as accompanist and occasional director and he's become a great friend to us. He has a tremendous talent well demonstrated to us over the years in performance, and hopefully we will still see him from time to time in the future.

We secured the services of Leslie Olive in the interim following Charlie's departure but were extremely fortunate to appoint Anne Reece as our regular rehearsal pianist. Anne has already shown us what a highly skilled pianist she is and we are so pleased to have her with us.

Of course, we would be nowhere without our Director Matthew Rudd, now (incredibly) about to start his twentieth season with the choir. Friendly persuasion is Matthew's preferred approach and it always gets the best from us time and time again – as ever, he deserves our maximum support and deepest thanks.

Your committee has as usual been busy behind the scenes planning our way out of the hiatus caused by COVID, and I hope members will agree that we have 'kept the show on the road' as far as we are able. We have now reconstituted as a board of trustees with additional management committee roles undertaken by co-opted members. All involved deserve our thanks for the work they do for the choir. In particular, Roger has had a lot to do in covering the additional reporting demands for the CIO as well as the tour finances at the same time as coping with a period of illness which prevented his planned trip to Tuscany. Liz is settling into the Secretary role and looking at ways to expand our links to regular supporters. Caroline has given invaluable advice on the transition to CIO and done a lot of the hard work over submissions to the Charity Commission. Nick has kept us all up to speed with ICT advice, rehearsal notes and website management.

Our co-opted management committee members include Helen West, who continues highly effectively with the complex music library management task, and Angela Major working with Pete Lancaster on publicity and promotion – we accept we need to do more here and are working on various ideas to build audience numbers as well as develop the charitable aspects of the choir in this regard. Outside the committee, Bev has helped organise our social life together!

During the year we also provided free or reduced membership costs for the disadvantaged and those in full time education.

For a group of singers from the choir, our saddest engagement of the year had come on 1<sup>st</sup> June when we were invited to add our voices to the moving but joyful memorial service for our much-missed colleague Terry Cross, who had passed away on 6<sup>th</sup> May following a lengthy fight against terminal cancer. The service at Terry's beloved St Margaret's parish church at Chippenham showed just how wide-ranging Terry's gifts were, and he will long remain in our memory. Terry's contribution to the choir – as enthusiastic bass, carpenter, lighting technician and very good company at the pub post-rehearsal summed up his approach to life in general.

During the period covered by the report there have been some changes in the ranks. We have said farewell to some – including Shirley Lowe who has sung with us for many years. Others such as Ellen Simmons have made career-related moves elsewhere. We are so pleased for Anna Jones who has been appointed Chaplain at Queens' College Cambridge and left us at the end of August to focus on this demanding new role. We are sorry to see them go but have been cheered by an influx of newcomers to the choir, including Monica Underwood and Tony and Anita Catterick, who are already making strong contributions. Mike Banyard has made a welcome return following illness.

As mentioned above, our priority now is to get back to a regular programme and build our forward engagements to enable more focus on marketing and audience growth, at a difficult time where pennies are being counted and coming to a choral concert may not be at the top of the priority list – it's going to be a challenge but we are well equipped to meet it going forward into the 2022-23 season, with a varied and exciting programme for the year to come.

## **Charitable objectives**

The charity's charitable object, as set out in the Constitution is as follows:

"The objects of the CIO are to advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in and appreciation of the art and science of choral music in all its aspects by the presentation of public choral concerts in East Anglia and for the general purposes of such charitable bodies or for such purposes as shall be exclusively charitable as the Committee may from time to time decide."

### **Summary of the main activities undertaken for public benefit:**

The activities of the charity are to:

- Perform public choral concerts throughout the year.
- Educate the general public in a wide variety of choral music across the ages both accompanied and unaccompanied including new compositions.
- Provide free or reduced membership costs for the disadvantaged and those in full time education.
- Provide a wide variety of rewarding volunteering roles to deliver the charity's activities.
- Provide free or reduced price tickets to young people and the disadvantaged.

- Provide occasional opportunities for school children to participate in concerts.

## **Musical Director's report**

The summer of 2021 saw a welcome return to rehearsals after a long break enforced by the pandemic. Our first concert of the Autumn season, in October 2021, was the long awaited fund-raising concert for the Cathedral Music Fund. The first planning discussions for this concert took place in April 2018, an incredible three and a half years before the performance finally happened. Although Martin Gent, who instigated the event, retired from Consort during the intervening period, it was good to remain in close contact with him as the concert finally turned into a reality. We are particularly grateful to both Prime Brass and the Fairhaven Singers for being so willing to re-schedule the concert into their own busy programmes. Collaborating with these two fine local groups was a great pleasure, and it is clear that all involved would like to plan for future joint ventures.

Our performance of Messiah highlights in December 2021 (postponed since 2020) was another great success, and it was good to return to Chatteris Church after a lengthy absence from this particular venue. It was great to work once again with Steve Bingham, with whom we have built a strong relationship over the years, and also to introduce a fabulous new soloist to the choir, Julia Riley.

We were very sorry indeed to say goodbye to our accompanist Charlie during the Autumn Term; he has been the most enormous musical support to the choir as a whole and to me personally, as well as becoming a great friend to many of us. We were lucky to retain him for as long as we did, and wish him every success as he continues to develop his freelance career.

Our Spring season concert in the Cathedral featured another programme which had been delayed twice, but it was well worth the wait - Cherubini's Requiem, an extended work for choir without soloists which was performed with the accompaniment of a string quartet and organ - and a solitary, but vital, loud note for an orchestral gong! We were very pleased to appoint Anne Reece as our new accompanist during this term, and look forward to working with her over the coming seasons.

The summer term rehearsals proceeded well with the choir in fine form as we prepared for our performance in Sutton Church of 'An Italian Grand Tour' - choral music with an Italian theme, much of which was to be performed on our tour to Tuscany a couple of weeks later. Sadly an outbreak of Covid meant there was no alternative but to postpone the concert. Thankfully, the twice-postponed tour did take place, and enjoyable - if rather hot - concerts were given to appreciative audiences in Lucca, Montecatini Terme and Sienna.

As always, I would like to end my report with some thanks: firstly, to all of the committee members who work tirelessly to keep everything going, in particular amidst the continuing challenges posed by the pandemic, which has often necessitated meeting with little notice to solve the next problem! Let us hope the worst is behind us now. 2022 marks my 20th anniversary with Consort; I can't quite imagine how twenty years can have passed so quickly, but never once have I not looked forward to a rehearsal or a concert - which is

thanks to you, the members, for your friendliness, support, ability, and willingness to engage with a very wide range of eclectic repertoire, which hopefully continues to please most of the people most of the time!

## **Treasurer's report**

Following consultation with the Charity Commission we have prepared this report covering the period from the time of incorporation of Ely Consort as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021 up to the end of our normal calendar year on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022. Thereafter we will provide reports annually up to the 31<sup>st</sup> August each year.

The concerts in Ely Cathedral in October, in Chatteris in December and in Ely Cathedral in March had audience numbers as expected and financially the concerts were close to breakeven. The addition of three months to our normal financial year for the time between incorporation in June 2021 and the beginning of our normal financial year in September 2021 resulted in additional income from subscriptions in the summer term. As a result Ely Consort showed a surplus of £483 over this 15 month accounting period instead of a £254 loss had the accounts covered our normal financial year.

The choir operates four bank accounts. Three bank accounts: a current account, a commission account and a reserves account are unrestricted accounts. The commission account shows money set aside by the Trustees from general funds in case they may wish to commission new works, but has the option to be used for general purposes. The fourth account, the project account, is a restricted account to cover the cost of occasional singing tours undertaken by the choir. The day to day running costs of the choir are financed through the unrestricted accounts.

The choir undertook a three concert tour in Italy in July 2022 following postponements of the tour in 2020 and 2021 because of the Covid pandemic. As the restricted account for the tour was set up in 2020 and spanned three years, we have not included details of income and expenditure in this financial report. However, the total of the account balances for the choir as a whole, including the tour account, at the beginning and end of the accounting period are included in the income and expenditure accounts in this report.

On August 31<sup>st</sup> 2022, the current account contained £1,148, the commission account contained £1,828, reserve account contained £5,112 and the tour account contained £1,083. The total current assets of Ely Consort were £9,171. The balance of the tour account will be used to refund two choir members who were unable to participate in the tour as planned owing to the two postponements in 2020 and 2021 due to the covid pandemic.

**ELY CONSORT CIO**

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT**

**7 June 2021 to 31 August 2022**

Income	7 June 2021 to 31 August 2022
	£            £
Subscriptions	5,514
Concert Receipts	2,914
Adverts Sponsors	120
Music Sales	0
Misc.	300
Bank Gross Interest	<u>1</u>
	<u><b>8,849</b></u>

less Expenses **7 June 2021 to 31 August 2022**

Music/printing	242
Rehearsal Pianist	1,993
Soloists / Orchestra	1,650
Music Director	1,760
Venue Hire	1,027
Room Hire	984
Website	77
Misc.	336
Insurance Fees	193
Coach Hire	0
Post Stationery	105
	<u><b>8,366</b></u>
Commissioned Music	0
<b>EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE</b>	<u><b>483</b></u>

**ELY CONSORT CIO**

**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST AUGUST 2022**

	<b>7 June 2021 to 31 August 2022</b>		
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>	0		
Bank Accounts	<b>9,171</b>		
	<u><b>9,171</b></u>		1
Sundry Creditors	<b>- 1,083</b>		2
	<u><b>- 1,083</b></u>		
	<u><b>8,088</b></u>		3
<b>REPRESENTED BY:</b>			
General Fund	<b>7,605</b>		4
Excess Income Over Expenditure	<b>483</b>		5
	<u><b>8,088</b></u>		

**Notes**

- 1 Total of Current, Tour, Commission, Reserve accounts at 31 Aug 2022
- 2 Tour refund creditors
- 3 Total of Current, Commission, Reserve accounts at 31 Aug 2022
- 4 Total of Current, Commission, Reserve accounts at 7 Jun 21
- 5 Surplus/Loss for period



## **Declaration**

The Trustees declare they have approved the Trustees' Report above.

Signed by the Chair of the Trustees, John Simmons, on behalf of the Trustees:

Signed:

*John Simmons*

Date: 2 November 2022

## **Independent Examiner's report**

The Independent Examiner's report to the Trustees of Ely Consort on the accounts for its first year as a charity from its incorporation on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021 to 31st August 2022 shown on pages 6 and 7.

### **Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Independent Examiner**

The charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### **Basis of independent examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

### **Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which:

- 1) gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements: to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or to which

- 2) in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Robert Andrews

Signed:

***Bob Andrews***

Date: 2 November 2022

Address: 3 Swards End, Wickford, Essex SS12 9PB

**Relevant professional qualification:**

Fellow of the Association of Charity Independent Examiners

## **Reserves Policy**

The Accounts show unrestricted reserves of £8,088. Going forward, in accordance with our Reserves Policy, our level of reserves represents some 80% of our 2022/23 budgeted income of approximately £10,000.

We consider that this is sufficient in the event of any uninsured or unanticipated events such as insufficient concert ticket sales to cover venue hires, professional musician costs or uninsured concert cancellation by venue.

## **Structure and governance**

**Type of governing document:** Constitution

**How the charity is constituted:** Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

**Trustee Selection:** Co-opted

**Trustee Names:**

John Simmons, Chair

Roger Hill, Treasurer

Nicholas Barton

Elisabeth Mellor

Caroline Stanger

It is considered that all Trustees and any others who could be understood to be 'managers' in the activities and affairs of Ely Consort are deemed to be 'fit and proper' persons under the terms of the Finance Act 2010.

**Musical Director:**

Mathew Rudd

## Reference details

**Charity Name:** Ely Consort CIO,

**Charity Registration Number:** 1194693

**Charity's principal address:** 33, Lawn Lane, Sutton, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB6 2RE